



United States Department of the Interior

KENAI NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Forested Area At The Russian River Ferry Closed To Reduce Human – Bear Encounters

Robin West, Manager of Kenai National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) announced today that a temporary closure of all public entry is in effect in a portion of the popular Russian River Access Area. The closure has been enacted due to the high level of bear activity

The closure encompasses approximately 29 acres near the Russian River Ferry. Specifically, the closure is in effect for:

All areas beginning at the Russian River Ferry entrance road and parking lot, downstream along the Kenai River to Lover's Rock adjacent to the Sterling Highway, then east on the Sterling Highway to the point of beginning. The enclosure includes the designated tent camping areas adjacent to the Russian River Ferry parking lot and all lands in the described area greater than 25 feet from the Kenai River.

The confluence of the Russian and Kenai Rivers is the most popular sport fishery in Alaska. The popularity of this fishery has unfortunately resulted in an accumulation of salmon carcasses along the banks of these rivers, which attracts both brown and black bears; at least five

bears are currently using this small area. The goal of this closure is to reduce human/bear encounters and minimize risk of harm to people and bears. Persons who enter the closed area are subject to apprehension and citations by Refuge Officers or other law enforcement personnel in the area.

Fishermen in this area are asked and encouraged to “STOP, CHOP, AND TOSS”. This simple action of chopping and tossing fish carcasses into deep, fast flowing waters will reduce the number of fish remains which wash up on the riverbanks and decrease those bear attractants.

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Kenai National Wildlife Refuge

Russian River Ferry Forested Area Closure, June 19, 2007

